

DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation named as finalist for 2015 National Gold Medal Awards

DOVER (June 1, 2015) – The [American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration](#) (AAPRA), in partnership with the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) (NRPA), has announced that DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation (Delaware State Parks) is one of four finalists for the 2015 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in the state parks systems category. The award recognizes state agencies as judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials.

"We are honored to be recognized as a finalist for such an esteemed award," said Ray Bivens, director, Division of Parks & Recreation and Delaware State Parks. "It is truly a testament of the hard work and dedication of Parks staff and volunteers who make the park system safe, fun, educational and innovative. Being recognized as a Gold Medal finalist is a wonderful way to highlight the amenities that make Delaware State Parks one of the finest state park systems in the country."

"For a state of Delaware's size, the diversity of our state parks system is amazing – you can canoe and kayak among the bald cypresses at Trap Pond State Park and feel like you're in the bayous of the South, or go to our beaches that rank among the cleanest in the country, or visit a former DuPont estate to take in a concert or go rock-climbing at Alapocas State Park," Delaware Gov. Jack Markell said. "The amenities and experiences and landscapes that Delaware State Parks provide

are world-class, and the state parks system overseen by DNREC is richly deserving of this accolade.”

Along with Delaware, other finalists in the state parks system category were: Georgia State Parks Recreation and Historic Sites Division, Missouri State Parks and Wyoming State Parks Historic Sites and Trails. The Gold Medal Award winner will be announced at the 2015 NRPA Annual Conference in Las Vegas in September.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary with NRPA and founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the U.S. that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition. For more information on the Gold Medal Awards, visit www.nrpa.org/goldmedal or www.aapra.org.

DNREC’s Division of Parks & Recreation is the steward of more than 39,000 acres of open space, including 16 state parks and irreplaceable cultural and natural resources. Delaware State Parks is committed to providing Delaware’s residents and visitors with safe and enjoyable recreational opportunities and a variety of interpretive and educational services. Please visit www.destateparks.com for more information about Delaware State Parks.

The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is a non-profit organization founded to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. For more information, visit www.aapra.org.

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 47,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, Parks & Recreation, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

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